



Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

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 Thursday, 17 January 2013, 3 p.m.
 New York

President: Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan)

Members:

Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
Australia	Ms. King
Azerbaijan	Mr. Musayev
China	Mr. Tian Lin
France	Mr. Araud
Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
Republic of Korea	Mr. Kim Sook
Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
Togo	Mr. Menan
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Thirty-first progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations
 Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2012/964)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Thirty-first progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2012/964)

The President: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Côte d'Ivoire to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Albert Koenders, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2012/964, which contains the thirty-first progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

I now give the floor to Mr. Koenders.

Mr. Koenders (*spoke in French*): It is a great honour and pleasure for me to address the Security Council today. The thirty-first progress report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/964) on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), which Council members have before them, provides an update on the situation on the ground since my last briefing on 26 July 2012 (see S/PV.6808) and the implementation of resolution 2062 (2012).

Eighteen months on from the post-electoral crisis and following the difficult weeks of summer and early autumn, marked by alarming security incidents, Côte d'Ivoire is now at an important turning point. Under the determined leadership of President Ouattara, the country is making encouraging progress towards economic growth, peace and stability. Most leaders and people want to turn the page and move towards the future. At the same time, to ensure that the progress made is robust and lasting in a political and security situation that remains sensitive at both the national and regional levels, several urgent structural measures must be taken and implemented in the coming months,

especially in the closely interlinked areas of security, political dialogue, justice and reconciliation.

The year 2013 will be an important one for Côte d'Ivoire. The situation is encouraging but remains fragile. Progress must be made simultaneously in the areas of security sector reform (SSR), disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), and political dialogue and reconciliation so that Côte d'Ivoire can act as a pillar of stability in its troubled subregion.

I would like to turn first to the question of political dialogue and reconciliation by underlining a number of commendable Government initiatives that have recently contributed to an easing of political tensions. I am thinking in particular of the provisional release of political detainees in late December 2012, several meetings of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the most recent of which was held this morning, and the upcoming meeting between Prime Minister Duncan and the the Front populaire ivoirien.

These efforts are critical as significant political divisions and tensions society still exist within Ivorian. As Special Representative of the Secretary-General, I use my good offices to encourage inclusive processes and facilitate reconciliation. I welcome the easing of tensions in recent weeks, which I believe offers a genuine opportunity. I recall here the terms of resolution 2062 (2012), adopted by the Council last July, which welcomed Government initiatives to

"enhance political dialogue with the political opposition, including extra-parliamentary political parties" (*resolution 2062 (2012), para. 11*),

and further called on the Government to "continue to step up concrete measures in this regard and ensure political space for the opposition" (*ibid.*). At the same time, the resolution very clearly urges the opposition parties to play a constructive role in reconciliation.

Moreover, open, transparent, free and regular elections could be an opportunity to bolster the democratic process in Côte D'Ivoire and contribute to national reconciliation. Resolution 2062 (2012) calls for the coming local elections to

"foster political inclusiveness and reconciliation, considering proper timing, security conditions and relevant electoral reform" (*ibid., para. 16*).

The elections were scheduled for late February, but this week the President announced a delay of several

weeks in order to "allow all major political parties to participate". As Council members know, pursuant to our mandate and in coordination with the United Nations Development Programme, UNOCI will provide limited support to the local elections, as its electoral assistance division was shut down, although a small number of experts have been retained to support the process.

Allow me now to raise the critical question of security. The Government has launched significant reforms. A comprehensive SSR strategy, which defines immediate and long-term priorities for national security, has been drawn up and a secretariat has been created to pilot the reform's implementation. It provides for key phases for the establishment of a disciplined, republican and responsible armed force, enhanced effectiveness of the gendarmerie and police, and strengthened protection for civilians throughout the country.

At the same time, the Government has adopted a national DDR policy and created a single authority in charge of DDR. It is now imperative that Côte d'Ivoire begin implementing these two programmes in a concrete fashion. SSR and DDR are critical tools for consolidating stability in the country, and are also among the most arduous of tasks.

In close cooperation with its bilateral and multilateral partners, UNOCI has made its expertise in those two fields available to the Government, with a stress on reinsertion and reintegration, which are critical to any DDR process. We appreciate the Government's move to launch the DDR process as soon as possible, and we encourage it to pursue that dynamic on the basis of three priorities: a politically balanced process; a database of ex-combatants with credible numbers and clearly defined eligibility criteria to which UNOCI has full access, as demanded in resolution 2062 (2012); and meaningful and innovative reinsertion and reintegration programmes.

With respect to security reform, the Secretary-General's report provides detailed information on the priorities requiring sustained follow-up. I note the importance of launching, immediately and on an urgent basis, initiatives aimed at building confidence within and among the police, the gendarmerie and the armed forces. Such an approach is essential not only to security but also to the other national priorities, in particular reconciliation and political dialogue.

(spoke in English)

Over the past six months, Côte d'Ivoire has continued to make important progress in terms of economic development. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General, the economy is on a fast track to recovery and growth rates are impressive. Following the recent meetings of the Consultative Group held in Paris on 4 and 5 December 2012, at which donors pledged over \$8 billion to fill the funding gap of the country's national development plan for 2013-2015, investments in employment and basic social services, notably health and education in vulnerable areas, are now particularly critical, as is sustained focus on good governance and fighting corruption, and continued coordination with donors to follow through on the commitments made in Paris.

It is also noteworthy that State authority is being restored throughout the country and that the National Assembly is functional. Before going on recess in December 2012, the Assembly passed some important bills, including one relating to the ratification of the Rome Statute. Finally, a new and smaller Government was formed in late November under the leadership of Prime Minister Duncan.

While Côte d'Ivoire has registered remarkable progress on several fronts, significant challenges remain to be addressed in 2013. The root causes of instability and potential triggers of violence still need to be tackled, including some of the issues I have mentioned, related to governance, justice and human rights, as well as land tenure and identity.

As Members of the Council are aware, between August and October 2012 there was a spate of attacks targeting national security forces in and around Abidjan, and along the borders with Ghana and Liberia, with the aim of destabilizing President Ouattara's Government. Although their intensity has diminished somewhat in recent weeks, these attacks have highlighted both a higher degree of paramilitary organization within opposition groups and vulnerabilities in the national security and law enforcement institutions. They also highlighted the need to prioritize SSR and DDR programmes, as mentioned earlier, including support to the police and judicial actors in investigating such attacks more professionally and rapidly.

To address those challenges and, more generally, prevailing insecurity in western Côte d'Ivoire, including criminal activities, armed robbery, the illegal

circulation of weapons and cross-border movements, which also affect international development partners and the private sector, the Government has responded swiftly, including recently by conducting a joint operation with Liberia.

For our part, UNOCI has strengthened its military presence along the borders with Liberia and Ghana. As per the mandate assigned by the Council to the mission, protection of civilians remains a major priority, requiring concerted efforts on the part of the Government and UNOCI, without prejudice to the Government's primary responsibility to protect its people. In order to maximize synergies and enhance the implementation of its mandate at the local level and throughout the country, we have, in cooperation with the United Nations Country Team, strengthened the presence of civilian personnel in a number of field offices assisting the process of conflict prevention and mitigation. This process also aims at fostering a more integrated approach between the mission and the country team, as the Council requested at our most recent meeting, and more proactive outreach to other key actors on the ground, such as non-governmental organizations, civil society and the private sector.

Meanwhile, and with a view to strengthening the important tool of inter-mission cooperation, UNOCI and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) have also been coordinating actions and the use of assets in the border area, in support of the increased cooperation between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, notably through the use of the three armed helicopters that shortly will be transferred from UNMIL to UNOCI for cross-border operations. The two missions have also enhanced information-sharing and regular meetings, and are developing a cross-border communication strategy within the context of intermission cooperation.

UNOCI is also strengthening its cooperation with the United Nations country team in Ghana on issues of common concern, notably that of Ivorian refugees living in Ghana. I would also like to bring to the Council's attention the fact that, in response to recent developments in Mali and as part of prudent planning, UNOCI has increased its vigilance and security preparedness along Côte d'Ivoire's northern border with Mali and in support of Ivorian efforts to secure the border. The United Nations humanitarian community, meanwhile, is finalizing contingency planning efforts.

Turning to human rights, violence has been reported during attacks on civilians and security forces, as well as during operations and arrests undertaken by security forces. I condemn all violence and violations of human rights. UNOCI is engaged in activities aimed at preventing and promoting the respect of human rights, especially those of women and children, and the mission has also strengthened training on human rights for Ivorian security forces and provides assistance on issues related to the justice reform and investigations.

I am troubled about continued reports of sexual violence. Perceived impunity remains an important concern, and recent violations — including those in Bonon and Nahibly — have to be thoroughly investigated, as requested by the Council. It is essential that those who are responsible for gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law be held accountable, irrespective of their political affiliation and in accordance with the country's international obligations. Improvements in the justice and penitentiary systems have been triggered and can be further enhanced to combat impunity in a sustainable way and improve access to equitable justice.

In conclusion, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire will continue to need the support and engagement of its international and regional partners, including the United Nations, in order to consolidate the significant gains achieved and address remaining challenges and the root causes — notably land and identity issues — of the repeated crises that have engulfed the country on so many occasions over the past decades. This will be a critical year for Côte d'Ivoire and for UNOCI, which I hope will continue to enjoy the strong and sustained support of the Security Council. In the context of a volatile regional security situation, the stability and economic success of Côte d'Ivoire are more important than ever to the stability of West Africa.

As requested by the Council, a Headquarters assessment mission will be deployed in early February. The mission will thoroughly assess the situation on the ground, assist the mission in developing benchmarks with the Government, as requested, to measure progress, and prepare a special report to the Council to be issued by 31 March.

The President: I thank Mr. Koenders for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bamba (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): First of all, on behalf of the President and people of Côte d'Ivoire, allow me to express our gratitude for the numerous expressions of sympathy that followed the deadly stampede that took place on the evening 31 December, which resulted in approximately 60 deaths.

My delegation takes note of the excellent report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/964). We of course endorse its conclusions and recommendations.

Moreover, my delegation would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Bert Koenders, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, whom I greet here, for his outstanding briefing on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, which accords with the reality on the ground. We commend him for his excellent work in close cooperation with Ivorian officials.

I should like to make some brief comments on some points that my delegation deems crucial.

My delegation agrees that, 18 months after the end of the post-electoral crisis, Côte d'Ivoire has made significant progress in various areas. We also agree that Côte d'Ivoire finds itself at a crossroads in its history — one that includes many challenges that must be urgently overcome in order to capitalize on the dividends of the enormous progress that has been made in a short time thanks to the unstinting support of the United Nations in general, and of the Security Council in particular, as well as of friendly countries and development partners.

Against the backdrop of the strenuous efforts made by all to ensure sustainable progress in Côte d'Ivoire, my country would like to reiterate its resolute commitment and the strong determination of the authorities and people of Côte d'Ivoire, under the leadership of our President, to continue to take concrete, resolute steps to first, strengthen stability and security, including at the subregional level; secondly, to ensure security sector reform (SSR) and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; thirdly, to expand the political dialogue and hold local elections; fourthly, to strengthen national reconciliation; fifthly, to promote respect for human rights; and, sixthly, to reinvigorate the economy and planning for development.

With regard to strengthening security and stability in Côte d'Ivoire, including the subregional dimension, in the face of the attacks on law and order forces aimed

at destabilizing the country, the Government has taken robust measures through the National Security Council, presided over by the country's President. Moreover, closer cooperation on the political and military levels with Liberia, as well as in the judicial sector with neighbouring Ghana, have made it possible to reduce that threat. In that regard, I should also mention the outstanding inter-mission cooperation that has prevailed between the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). That has significantly contributed to strengthening security, especially along the Liberia-Côte d'Ivoire border. In that regard, my delegation entirely agrees with the Secretary-General's recommendation to

"defer the reduction of the military strength of UNOCI by 955 personnel as reflected in the authorized strength in Security Council resolution 2062 (2012) until after the assessment to be conducted in early 2013" (S/2012/964, para. 55).

My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate to the Government and Parliament of Ukraine the gratitude of Côte d'Ivoire for their decision to renew the deployment of three attack helicopters to UNOCI, including their equipment.

All of those actions will contribute to significantly reducing, and even bring to an end, the planned attacks against Ivorian armed forces. For its part, the Government will continue to pursue strengthening the security of people and property, so as to maintain an environment conducive for international investment.

With regard to security and the situation in the subregion, current events have shown us that the offensive carried out last week by terrorist groups against southern Mali pose a real, direct and immediate to international and regional peace and security alike. Above all, that poses an immediate danger to all of Mali's neighbours, including Côte d'Ivoire.

Côte d'Ivoire, which currently holds the chairmanship of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), welcomes the swift response of France following the request for counter-terrorism assistance aimed at stabilizing the crisis and preserving the territorial integrity of a United Nations Member State. I should like here to express our sincere gratitude to France for its leadership on managing the crisis in Mali. I also wish to thank the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Germany, Belgium, Denmark

and Spain for their varied support in the context of the operations in Mali.

During an official visit to Berlin, in his capacity as ECOWAS Chairman, President Alassane Ouattara yesterday launched an appeal for all States to mobilize in order to support the efforts being made by France in Mali. The ECOWAS general staff has already met, on 15 and 16 January in Bamako, and are in the process of finalizing their appraisal of the situation and making operational plans for the effective deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) in conformity with resolution 2085 (2012). This Saturday, an extraordinary summit of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government will take place in Abidjan against the backdrop of these developments.

ECOWAS is preparing for the imminent deployment to Mali of the contingents made available by various African States. On its part, Côte d'Ivoire has made available a 500-strong battalion in Abidjan to ensure logistics at our international airport in the context of deployments and rotations associated with the ongoing operations in Mali.

It is important to underscore that Côte d'Ivoire, which shares a border with southern Mali, is directly concerned by the terrorist threat in the north, all the more so given the numerous instances of infiltration by terrorists in southern Mali, including along countries bordering Mali. Ivorian authorities take that threat very seriously, given that, owing to our chairmanship of ECOWAS, our country plays a key role with regard to the institutional and decision-taking framework concerning the crisis in Mali.

With regard to counter-terrorism efforts, discussions should be pursued in order to strengthen security in States involved in resolving the crisis in Mali, including those who share a border with that brotherly country.

With regard to security sector reform and DDR, the interministerial working group on SSR established in April 2012 has now completed its work. That has made it possible to put in place a national strategy on the reform of the security sector. The goals are to profoundly transform that sector while taking into account the country's need and current circumstances. The National Security Council has endorsed the group's conclusions. What remains is to determine the cost of the activities contemplated.

With regard to DDR, on 2 August 2012, the Government adopted its national policy on DDR, which sets up a single unit responsible for DDR. Known as the Authority on DDR, that body will be led by the Ivorian national Fidèle Sarassoro, who assumed his post on 1 October 2012 and once served as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is important to note that Mr. Sarassoro reports directly to President Ouattara, so as to ensure the effectiveness of the duty entrusted to him.

The Authority's task includes the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of approximately 100,000 former fighters. The Government is working to update the existing database so that the list of persons concerned is exhaustive, credible and transparent. As mentioned by the Secretary-General in paragraph 69, the database will of course be shared with ONUCI as soon as it is available.

Along the same lines, it is worth mentioning the outstanding work done by the national commission to combat the proliferation and illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons. That commission is working throughout the entire country to promote voluntary disarmament. In that regard, my country would like to thank the Governments of Germany, Australia and Japan for their ongoing support for the commission.

With regard to expanding the political dialogue and the holding of local elections, my delegation takes note of the progress made in those areas as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General.

The local elections, due to be held in February 2013, will be delayed by several weeks to allow all political parties, including the Front populaire ivoirien (FPI), former President Gbagbo's political party, to participate effectively, in particular since President Ouattara is determined to ensure that the elections are inclusive, free, fair and transparent. As we approach the local elections, which are a unique platform for concrete action by all stakeholders in Ivorian politics, Prime Minister Daniel Kablan Duncan has been instructed by the Head of State to start a political dialogue with the opposition through the Permanent Consultative Framework. It should further be recalled that the provisional release of some supporters of the former President in December 2012 has helped to reduce political tension, as has the facilitation provided

by the President of Senegal with regard to the FPI's participation in the upcoming local elections.

On the basis of such developments, the Ivorian Prime Minister has met some of the political opposition groups in order to discuss the conditions for the participation of those political parties in the upcoming local elections. The funding of political parties for their participation in the said elections was the focus of that meeting. Another meeting that, according to the President, was crucial to the political parties taking part in the local elections took place just this morning. A meeting is due to be held tomorrow between Mr. Gbagbo's party, the FPI, and a Government delegation, led by the Prime Minister. The Council will be informed of the outcomes of those meetings as soon as possible.

With regard to national reconciliation, the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission has received resources for its activities from not only the Government but also development partners. In that connection, I would like to note that the Commission wishes to branch out at the local level so as to involve the communities, young people and women. That participative approach will therefore be supported by the already existing non-governmental organizations that are in daily contact with the people, helping them to be a true catalyst for reconciliation. The Commission will issue a report by the end of the year.

Regarding human rights, at the national level, the Government has focused on educating all socio-professional layers of Ivorian society, starting with children and young people. The Government has therefore introduced into the primary and secondary curricula a course that is intended to teach children about human rights and citizenship.

Concerning the security forces, capacity-building seminars are being provided by the Government in partnership with UNOCI. Also, the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights has organized awareness-raising courses within the country for the population.

With regard to the judicial proceedings following the inquiry undertaken by the Government Prosecutor, it was found that there was sufficient evidence to charge all detainees and all those currently released on bail in the context of that process. That allowed for the release on bail of some supporters of former President Gbagbo.

Regarding the investigations under way concerning displaced persons from the Nahibly camp, as I said

in my statement on the adoption of resolution 2062 (2012) (see S/PV.6817), the President of the Republic, concerned about establishing the truth, ordered an inquiry. The Government Prosecutor attached to the trial court of Man therefore took up the case. However, problems related to the security of those conducting the investigation and of witnesses has hindered the smooth proceeding of that trial. The issue was referred to Mr. Koenders, and UNOCI has offered to help us to overcome that problem.

With regard to developments in ratifying the Rome Statute, the Ivorian Parliament has enacted a law to amend the Constitution to enable the President to ratify that treaty. It is now a matter of the Ivorian Parliament adopting the draft law authorizing the Head of State to ratify treaties.

I now turn to the economic recovery. Since the completion of the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, Côte d'Ivoire has continued to receive support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. High-level officials from both organizations have visited Abidjan, in particular Ms. Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the IMF.

The Ivorian authorities are aware that rebirth comes in the wake of reconciliation, following a traumatic period of division. That is why the President continues to reach out to the opposition in order to ease political tensions and at the same time urges all partners to support Côte d'Ivoire in achieving the vision of its becoming an emerging country by 2020.

The Ivorian authorities are making efforts to reduce the debt to gross domestic product ratio, which went from 80 per cent to 67 per cent, then to 18 per cent; the standard is 40 per cent. Likewise, the Ivorian economy saw a growth rate of 8.6 in 2012, and we expect a growth rate of 9 per cent for 2013, rising to a double-figure growth rate by 2014. In that respect, the President of the Republic is determined that economic growth must be inclusive. That is to say, it should focus on fighting poverty through substantial social investment.

I would like to conclude by saying that the foundations of Côte d'Ivoire remain sound and that we have good prospects of overcoming the many political, social and economic challenges facing us. With the restoration of stability and the relaunch of the economy, supported by the ambitious reconstruction programme, Côte d'Ivoire, as President Ouattara said in Germany, can once again become the driving force

of the West African economy and a political, economic and cultural showcase. With the invaluable assistance of our bilateral partners and international institutions and organizations, including the Security Council, we are sure that we can successfully meet those challenges.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.